

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-24 INR-11 LAB-06

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FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4379

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB BL

SUBJ: GOB ADOPTS HARD LINE TOWARD TEACHERS

REF: LA PAZ 5948 AND PREVIOUS

1. PROGRESS TOWARD THE SOLUTION OF THE LA PAZ TEACHERS STRIKE WAS BLOCKED WHEN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION SUDDENLY BROKE OFF NEGOTIATIONS WHICH HAD ALMOST PRODUCED AN AGREEMENT. ON SEPTEMBER 26 THE MINISTRY WAS INFORMED BY MEDIATORS THAT AN ASSEMBLY OF THE TEACHERS RANK AND FILE COMMITTEE HAD ACCEPTED THE MINISTRY'S PROPOSALS FOR ENDING THE STRIKE WITH MINOR RESERVATIONS. THE MINISTER ASKED THAT THE TEACHERS GIVEN THE MEDIATORS WRITTEN ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THEIR ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINISTRY PROPOSALS. AT A LATER MEETING WITH THE MEDIATORS WHEN THE RANK AND FILE COMMITTEE'S WRITTEN ACCEPTANCE WAS PRESENTED, THE MINISTER CLAIMED THAT THE PROPOSALS ACCEPTED BY THE TEACHERS WERE NOT THOSE MADE BY THE MINISTRY. THE MEDIATORS CHARGED THE MINISTER WITH BAD FAITH, ANNOUNCED THAT THEIR MEDIATION WAS TERMINATED AND DECLARED THEIR TOTAL SUPPORT FOR THE STRIKING TEACHERS. ON SEPTEMBER 28, FOUR LEADERS OF THE RANK AND FILE COMMITTEE WERE ARRESTED AS WAS DR. MANUEL MORALES DAVILA, PRESIDENT OF THE CONFEDERATION OF PROFESSIONALS, ONE OF THE MEDIATORS. THE STRIKE CONTINUES.

2. URBAN TEACHER ELECTIONS IN COCHABAMBA ON SEPTEMBER 27

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WERE INTERRUPTED WHEN UNIDENTIFIED PERSONS ASSAULTED THE URNS

AND BURNED BALLOTS. THE ASSAULT REPORTEDLY OCCURRED WHEN IT BECAME CLEAR THAT THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION-BACKED TICKET HAD FALLEN HOPELESSLY BEHIND.

3. COMMENT: THE GOB'S HARD LINE IS PROBABLY DESIGNED TO DEMONSTRATE TO POTENTIAL ENEMIES OF THE REGIME THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS STILL STRONG AND CAPABLE OF ENERGETIC ACTION. IT IS ALSO PROBABLE THAT THE GOB WISHES TO TERMINATE TEACHER UNREST QUICKLY SO THAT CERTAIN ELEMENTS IN THE MILITARY WILL NOT BE TEMPTED TO CLAIM THAT THE TIME IS NOT RIPE FOR ELECTIONS.
STEDMAN

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